

REMARKS

The Office Action of February 20, 2008, has been carefully considered.

Claims 5-12 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Hawkins et al in view of Henrichsen et al and Pearce et al. The Hawkins et al reference has been cited to show a crankcase filter comprising an upstream inlet 26 connected to the crankcase, a downstream air outlet 30 connected to the inlet manifold to supply filtered air, and a filter means comprising a wall of fibrous material 40 running between the walls of the filter container, and which separates the container into an inlet chamber 64 and an outlet chamber 68. The outlet chamber comprises the air outlet 30, as well as a liquid outlet 58 in the lower portion which is connected to the crankcase for return of oil collected by the filter.

Claims 5 and 9 have now been amended to better recite the invention, as shown in Figure 1 of the present specification. Thus, Claims 5 and 9 now recite that the air outlet is disposed at a level above the air inlet, and the outlet chamber comprises the air outlet and the liquid outlet. Moreover, the filter means is now recited as being disposed at a level such that filter surface is available which is not contaminated by oil from the crankcase. This is clearly shown in Figure 1, which specifically shows filter material 15 being located above the inlet from the crankcase and uncontaminated by the oil from the crankcase.

The result of the claimed structure is that as air and oil particles flow from the crankcase to the filter, fresh filter material is available to catch oil and particles from the crankcase, which fall to the bottom of the filter by gravity and are returned to the crankcase. The cleaned air rises through uncontaminated filter material and is removed at the outlet.

This structure is not shown in Hawkins et al. In particular, the air inlet of Hawkins et al is virtually at the top of the filter unit, with the air outlet therebelow. Thus, as air and oil droplets are received by the filter, virtually all of the air may pass through filter material which has been contaminated by oil. In the structure of the invention, to the contrary, filter material is provided at a level above the level of contamination by the crankcase oil, thus enabling improved cleaning of the air.

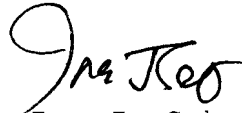
The Henrichsen et al and Pearce et al references have been cited to show specific filter materials, but are not directed to crankcase filters and do not cure the defects of the Hawkins et al reference.

Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

The dependencies of claims 6-8 and 10-12 have been corrected.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of the application with amended claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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